

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-02

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 ITF-05 SR-02

ORM-01 VO-03 SCA-01 /070 W
----- 090658

P R 101040Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3742

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCPAC

CDR USSAG-NKP

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 3201

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, LA

SUBJ: REQUEST FOR SUBSIDY FOR NGON SANANIKONE

1. FIN MIN NGON SANANIKONE SENT ME A NOTE MORNING MAY 10 REQUESTING I CALL ON HIM AT DEPUTY C-IN-C GEN. KOU PRASITH ABHAY'S HOUSE AT CHINAIMO MILITARY CAMP. WE MET FOR AN HOUR. NGON WAS DISPIRITED. HE HAD SUBMITTED HIS RESIGNATION TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON MAY 8 AND WAS STILL AWAITING SOUVANNA'S RESPONSE. KOU PRASITH, WHO DID NOT TAKE PART IN CONVERSATION, WAS IN SAME SITUATION AND SO WAS MIN DEF SISOUK WHO HAD BEEN THERE THAT MORNING BUT HAD GONE BACK TO THAILAND. NONE WANTED TO BE CONSIDERED A DESERTER, NGON SAID, BUT ALL FEARED FOR THEIR LIVES.

2. NGON SAID HIS FAMILY WAS NOW IN NONGKHAI, THAILAND. HE PLANNED TO LEAVE MAY 11 BY HELICOPTER FOR UDORN AND THEN MAKE HIS WAY TO BANGKOK WHERE HE WOULD STAY FOR AT LEAST A FEW WEEKS. LIKE HIS BROTHER PHOUI HE CAN BE REACHED THROUGH LAO EMBASSY THERE. HE PLANNED TO INSTALL
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HIMSELF IN THAILAND, OUTSIDE OF BANGKOK WHICH WAS TOO

EXPENSIVE.

3. THE REASON HE WANTED TO SEE ME WAS THAT HE AND OTHERS WHO ALSO FELT IN DANGER (LIST PARA 5) HAD NO FUNDS AND WONDERED WHETHER THE USG COULD GIVE THEM A SUBSIDY AT LEAST TO THE "POLITICAL EXILES" OF PERHAPS 100 THOUSAND DOLLARS EACH, IN ORDER TO HELP THEM START A NEW LIFE. MOST WOULD GO TO THAILAND AND OTHERS TO FRANCE (KOU PRASITH IS PLANNING TO GO TO PARIS WHERE HE HAS AN APARTMENT). WHEN I ASKED ABOUT THE FABLED SANANIKONE WEALTH, NGON REPLIED THAT IT WAS FAR LESS THAN ALLEGED AND ALL IN LAND AND HOUSES IN LAOS; HE HAD NO ASSETS ABROAD. I SAID THAT I WOULD, OF COURSE, CONVEY HIS REQUEST TO MY GOVERNMENT, BUT THAT, SPEAKING FRANKLY, I THOUGHT HE SHOULD NOT BE OPTIMISTIC. WE WERE CONFRONTED BY AN ENORMOUS REFUGEE PROBLEM AT A TIME WHEN UNEMPLOYMENT OF AMERICANS WAS RUNNING AT NINE PERCENT. I WOULD REPORT HIS REQUEST BUT I WOULD NOT COUNT ON IT IF I WERE HE.

4. NGON SAID HE HAD ALWAYS PLANNED TO STAY IN LAOS AND "CULTIVATE HIS GARDEN" EVEN IF HE WERE OBLIGED TO WITHDRAW FROM POLITICS. HE HAD THEREFORE NEVER MADE ANY INVESTMENTS ABROAD AND WOULD HAVE ALMOST NOTHING WITH WHICH TO START LIFE AGAIN. HE WAS NOW HOWEVER, CONVINCED THAT WERE HE AND THE OTHERS HE HAD LISTED TO STAY IN LAOS THEIR LIVES WOULD BE IN DANGER. IN HIS CASE HE HAD BEEN SPECIFICALLY THREATENED.

5. FOLLOWING IS THE LIST GIVEN TO ME BY NGON:

A) POLITICS:

PHOU SANANIKONE PRESIDENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
CHAO SOPSAISANA VICE PRESIDENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
GENERAL AMKHA SOUKHAVONG
OUN SANANIKONE
COLONEL KHAM SING SANANIKONE

B) GOVERNMENT:

SISOUK NA CHAMPASSAK
NGON SANANIKONE
KHAMPHAY ABHAY
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TIANETHONE CHANTHRASY
HOUMPHANH SAIGNASITH

C) MILITARY:

GENERAL KOU PRASITH ABHAY
GENERAL OUDONE SANANIKONE
GENERAL VANG PAO
GENERAL KHAMHOU BOUTSARATH

GENERAL NOUPHET
GENERAL PHASOUK
COLONEL LEE NAMATHAO
COLONEL LOUNE SISOUNOUL
COMMANDANT CHANTHARASY SANANIKONE
COLONEL KOUPRASONG ABHAY

6. COMMENT: THIS IS A VERY DIFFICULT MOMENT FOR NGON. HE HAS BEEN A ROGUE, BUT HE HAS ALSO BEEN A LAO PATRIOT, A MINISTER AND FRIEND OF THE UNITED STATES FOR ALMOST TWENTY YEARS. WE CANNOT OF COURSE GIVE HIM AND HIS COLLEAGUES THE KIND OF FUNDS HE REQUESTS. WE SHOULD HOWEVER CONSIDER SYMPATHETICALLY REQUESTS FOR ASYLUM FROM LAO MEMBERS OF THE VIENTIANE SIDE WHO ARE FLEEING LAOS AT THIS TIME. WE AGREE WITH NGON THAT THOSE ON THE LIST ARE IN DANGER. MOST, AS IN THE CASES OF NGON AND KOUPRASITH, WILL PROBABLY GO EITHER TO THAILAND OR TO FRANCE. FEW HAVE MOVABLE ASSETS, UNLIKE THE VIETNAMESE AND CHINESE MERCHANTS WHO ARE ALSO LEAVING. WE WOULD HOPE THEN THAT THOSE WHO DO WANT TO GO TO U.S. CAN BE HELPED AS WE HAVE THE CAMBODIANS AND VIETNAMESE.

CHAPMAN

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